

Amendments to the Drawings:

The sheet of drawings attached in the Appendix includes a new FIG. 2 per the Examiner's request. No new matter has been added.

REMARKS

The Examiner's comments from the Office Action mailed September 9, 2008 have been carefully considered. Claims 1-11, 13-16, 19-23, 26-37, and 41-43 remain pending in the application. Claims 38-40 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. The subject matter of claim 39 has been incorporated into claim 35. FIG. 2 has been newly added to show the cutting device per the Examiner's request. Amendments have been made to the specification to refer to new FIG. 2. Support for these amendments can be found throughout the specification and figures, e.g., on page 4, lines 1-9, and original claims 11, 18, and 24. No new matter has been added. The amendments made herein place the application into condition for allowance.

Reexamination and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for allowing claims 1-11, 13-16, 19-23, and 26-34.

Applicants further thank the Examiner for indicating claim 39 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the features of the base claim 35. The features of claim 39 have been incorporated into claim 35. Accordingly, claim 35 is now allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 39. Claim 39 has been canceled.

Objection to the Drawings

Formal objection has been made to the drawings for omitting the cutting device. In response, Applicants submit new FIG. 2 herewith to show the cutting device. FIG. 2 is a schematic block diagram showing the base plate 2, the connecting module 3 for electrical cores, and the connecting module 4 for optical waveguides. A cutting device 6 is shown arranged on a top part 4b of the connecting module 4 for optical waveguides. Support for new FIG. 2 can be found throughout the specification and figures, e.g., on page 4, lines 1-9, and in original claims 11, 18, and 24. No new matter has been added. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection.

Amendments to the Specification

A new paragraph has been added to page 5, line 7 of the specification to describe new FIG. 2. Support for the new paragraph can be found throughout the specification and figures, e.g., on page 3, lines 30-33, page 4, lines 1-9, and in original claims 11, 18, and 24. No new matter has been added.

Claim Objections

Formal objection has been made to claim 41 for a typographical error. Appropriate correction has been made to claim 41. The term “centring” has been amended to recite “centering.” Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections

Claim 40 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph for an antecedent basis issue. Claim 40 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, thereby rendering the rejection moot.

Claims 35, 37, 38, and 40-42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4, 784,456 to Smith. Claims 38 and 40 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, thereby rendering the rejection with respect to these claims moot. With respect to claims 35, 37, 41, and 42, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claim 35 has been amended to incorporate the features of allowable claim 39. Accordingly, claim 35 is allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 39. Claims 37, 41, and 42 depend from claim 35 and are allowable for at least the same reasons. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 35, 37, 41, and 42 are respectfully requested.

Claims 36 and 43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Smith. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

Claims 36 and 43 depend from claim 35 and are allowable over Smith for at least the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 35. Withdrawal of the rejection and allowance of claims 36 and 43 are respectfully requested.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request a Notice of Allowance. If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

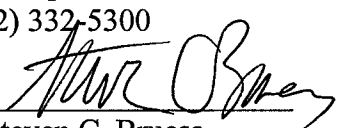
Respectfully submitted,

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